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Nota di contenuto	Contents -- ; Chapter 1: The origins of the controversy -- ; 1.1. Thom's hypotheses -- ; 1.2. Methods of approach -- ; 1.3. Archaeological reaction to Thom's major publications in the 1960s and 1970s -- ; Chapter 2: Early hypothesis-testing in western Scotland -- ; 2.1. The Kintraw standing stone -- ; 2.2. The Cultoon stone circle on Islay -- ; 2.3. The stone circle in North Uist – Sornach Coir Fhinn -- ; 2.4. Brainport Bay, Argyll -- ; Chapter 3: Decisive tests in Orkney and Ireland -- ; 3.1. Introduction -- ; 3.2. Decisive tests in Orkney -- ; 3.3. Newgrange, Ireland -- 3.4. Maeshowe chambered cairn, Orkney -- ; 3.5. Ness of Brodgar (ceremonial centre) -- ; 3.6. A 'Beltane line'? -- ; 3.7. Julius Caesar's evidence -- ; 3.8. The Survey of the Ring of Brodgar -- ; Chapter 4: Research into Alexander Thom's fieldwork -- ; 4.1. Background and the work of Alexander Thom -- ; 4.2. Early reaction from British archaeology -- ; 4.3. Testing the Thom hypotheses -- ; 4.4. Reaction against Thom -- ; 4.5. Clive Ruggles test of the long alignment hypothesis -- ; 4.6. Further points about orientations and

alignments -- ; 4.7. Evidence for anti-Thom prejudice -- ; 4.8. What kind of astronomical alignments would Neolithic wise men invent? -- ; 4.9. Ruggles' and Barclay's criticism of the author's views -- ; 4.10. Archaeological evidence for chiefdoms -- ; 4.11. The skills of the priesthood -- ; 4.12. Modern and ancient alignments and orientations -- ; Chapter 5: The probable astronomy and geometry of Stonehenge -- ; 5.1. The astronomy of Stonehenge: modern studies -- ; 5.2. A new look at the astronomy and geometry of Stonehenge -- ; 5.3. Conclusions -- ; 5.4. Other modern opinions -- ; 5.5. Appendix -- ; Chapter 6: The Neolithic solar calendar, as seen on a kerb stone at Knowth, Ireland -- ; 6.1. Introduction -- ; 6.2. Independent evidence discovered at Knowth chambered cairn in Ireland -- ; 6.3. Is the Knowth fan-shaped pattern a calendar? -- ; 6.4. The fan-shaped design at Knowth -- Thomas' interpretation -- ; 6.5. A fresh look at the Knowth 'fan' -- ; 6.6. Conclusions concerning K15 -- ; Chapter 7: Current aspects of the research situation -- ; 7.1. A PhD thesis in 2016 -- ; 7.2. 'Inside the Neolithic mind: consciousness, Cosmos and the Realm of the Gods' (Lewis-Williams and Pearce - 2005) -- ; 7.3. 'The Materiality of the Sky (2014)'. Proceedings of the 22nd annual SEAC conference in Malta in 2014 (edited by Fabio Silva, Kim Malville, Tore Lomsdalen and Frank Ventura) -- ; 7.4. Archaeoastronomy: the Journal of the Center for Archaeoastronomy -- ; 7.5. Astronomy before the telescope (edited by Christopher Walker - 1996) -- ; 7.6. The author's academic training -- ; 7.7. Conclusion -- Appendix: Is there plausible evidence that the Ness of Brodgar priesthood had any esoteric knowledge? -- ; A. Introduction -- ; B. Methodology -- ; C. Five standing stone sites that already look promising from visual inspection, plus one which turned out to be a dud -- ; D. Orientations of Buildings -- Bibliography.

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#### Sommario/riassunto

"The book is semi-autobiographical in style charting Dad's investigation of Thom's theories across a number of key Neolithic sites from Kintraw to Stonehenge and finally Orkney. It also maps his own perspective of the changing reception to Thom's ideas by the archaeological profession from initial curiosity and acceptance to increasing scepticism. This healthy and necessary diversion of views energised Dad well into his retirement to continue researching in the area, conducting painstaking field investigations from which to inductively infer the astronomical abilities of the Neolithic 'priesthood'. The first six chapters are historical summaries of the various strands of evidence from key Neolithic sites across the UK and Ireland with the compelling evidence of the Ness of Brodgar added as an appendix. The final chapter was Dad's endeavour at adding some contemporary references and brought a more optimistic tone to the acceptance of Thom's ideas. Unfortunately ill-health prevented him from editing this final chapter so we have done this for him to enable publication" --

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